

A New Approach to Collection Bias in Academic Libraries: The Extent of Corporate Control in Journal Holdings

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Questions of collection bias in library journal collections usually turn on a left-right political contrast. This article presents another approach that distinguishes between corporate and non-corporate controlled publications. Using this method, the catalog holdings of all Canadian academic libraries were searched to determine the penetration of socio-political titles of mainstream "corporate publishers" and those of "small publishers." Canadian academic libraries privilege, by a wide margin, mainstream titles published by corporate entities, although some libraries have impressive "small publisher" collections. This article also analyzed the availability of mainstream and small publisher journals provided by ten popular electronic vendors. These vendors provide very low access to non-corporate "small publisher" titles while covering 100% of surveyed mainstream titles. The implications of such provision rates are examined from the perspective of the scholarly browsing process and the role of the university.

The question of bias in collection development procedures has, in the past five years, become a matter of some interest in library literature. For instance, Harmeyer (1995) examined the holdings of pro-choice and pro-life books in California public and academic libraries using a sample of eight books, four on either side of the contentious abortion debate. On this controversial topic, where readily identifiable positions on the right- and left-wing of the political spectrum are possible, he found that the surveyed libraries were three times more likely to collect pro-choice than pro-life books. He concluded that "academic and public librarians appear to be involved in selection development processes that consciously or

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subconsciously discriminate against a conservative social/political perspective” (p. 110).

Three other studies have dealt with possible collection development biases in book and journal selection. Hupp (1991) surveyed the holdings of Ohio public, academic, and special libraries using pre-formed lists of titles supplied by conservative and liberal organizations. The 37 conservative titles appeared more frequently than the 32 liberal titles—a result he suggests casts “doubt on claims...that American libraries ignore publications supporting conservative views” (p. 149). Another study by Hupp (1993) looked at journal holdings of Ohio libraries. Here he developed a tripartite categorization of political opinion journals that is almost numerically equivalent: (i) traditional conservative-rightist; (ii) traditional liberal-leftist; and (iii) alternative perspective, defined as “expressing the opinion of feminists, minority groups, gays and lesbians, the environmental movement and other views outside the conservative-liberal spectrum” (p. 136). Using these categories, he found that “mean holdings of titles for the three political samples are nearly identical” (p. 150).

Houbeck (1992) made a concerted effort to identify an equal number of conservative and liberal journals of opinion (30 each) and an equal number of so-called core journals in both categories (10 each). Using a vendor-specific electronic source that lists current journal holdings in academic libraries in the United States, he determined that “in 1991 academic libraries bought nearly 73% more copies of the titles from the liberal list than they did titles from the conservative list [and] 68% more copies of...core titles on the left than of their...counterparts on the right” (pp. 108-109). Even when titles are indexed, he continues, “conservative titles are acquired less frequently than their counterparts on the left, by about 5:3” (p. 118). Admittedly, for indexed journals begun after 1955, liberal and conservative titles were being acquired “in nearly equal numbers,” and for those titles begun in the period 1980-1990, “average and median subscriptions to indexed conservative titles actually exceed...subscriptions to indexed liberal titles” (p. 118). Nevertheless, it is clear that when an overall picture of the situation is taken, “there is a pronounced leftward tilt in academic journal holdings” (p. 121). This lack of balanced acquisition, he notes, is detrimental to a civilized pluralism that is one of the few major defenses against “intellectual savagery in all its forms” (p. 128).

What is common among all three studies is the tendency to try to compile numerically equivalent lists of liberal and conservative publications. There has been some criticism of this approach. For example, Pankake, Wittenborg, and Carpenter (1995) took umbrage at the methodology employed by Harmeyer to select representative titles dealing with abortion. They questioned whether numerical equivalency of titles on each side of the issue was a true indication of a qualitatively balanced collection, strongly arguing that other factors, such as the collection policies of individual libraries, the comprehensiveness or specificity of a particular title, and the quality of accessible reviews of a particular book can contribute to selection decisions. With respect to journals, another set of problems

arises—that of subjectivity. The threefold division—conservative, liberal, and alternative—employed by Hupp (1993) is a good example of the difficulties encountered in this respect. Hupp's statistics could change significantly were he to partition the so-called alternative titles between his other two groupings. Should most, or all, of these titles fall into one of the remaining categories, his conclusions would most likely have to be revised. In addition, the desire for numerical equivalency has pushed Hupp to fashion three approximately equal lists using artificial categories that have the effect of ghettoizing feminist, gay, and environmental thought outside a right-left continuum.

The problem of subjectivity is itself connected to an issue raised by Houbeck (1992). Houbeck, basing his contentions on Katz (1989), suggests that journals readily identifiable as liberal outnumber those that are readily identifiable as conservative by more than a 2:1 margin. This singular phenomenon almost ensures that libraries would hold, on a strictly numerical basis, more left-liberal titles than right-conservative ones simply because there are more from which to choose. It also ensures that, when equivalency lists are compiled, the more chronologically well-established left-liberal titles are compared with more recent right-conservative titles, with the natural result that cash-strapped libraries hold more of the former than of the latter. Apart from such considerations, the larger question of objectively defining what criteria are to be used to judge the exact place of a particular journal or magazine on the socio-political spectrum remains unanswered. Just as intriguing is the question of why such a stark difference in title counts exists in the first place. Houbeck (1992) claims to be mystified by this circumstance, and views the proliferation of left-leaning cultural and political journals as an indication that there is a vital and hugely influential liberal body of opinion that is over-represented in the nation's libraries.

Another approach, however, may be more illuminating. As Ohmann (1996) shows, mainstream corporate-controlled magazines preserve a dominant socio-political paradigm. Conversely, alternative "small publisher" journals are invariably the creation of historically marginalized voices. These "small publisher" magazines may feel, for various reasons, that the views of their constituencies are under-represented in large-circulation mainstream publications owned by corporate entities. And because corporate-controlled publications have an extensive, at times ubiquitous, market penetration, smaller independent publishers representing diverse bodies of opinion may feel a pressing need to offer numerous alternative fora to counteract the mammoth circulation advantage enjoyed by corporate publishers.

Nevertheless, large-circulation mainstream publications are not included in socio-political categories that make a distinction between the left and the right. The resulting perception of neutrality helps to reduce attention to media corporatization and its effects. Mainstream journals are primarily owned by vast vertically-integrated conglomerates organized to maximize shareholder return and therefore dependant on advertising revenue for a substantial portion of their income (Bagdikian, 1992; Ward, 1995). Accordingly, they may be seen as upholders of a

socio-political vision designed not to offend the interests and philosophy of the business and governmental communities in which they operate (Gitlin, 1980; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Thus, the left-right bifurcation of socio-political journals may be misplaced because it fails to make a distinction between corporate for-profit publishing entities supporting a dominant social paradigm and smaller, independent publishers, usually non-profits challenging the assumptions of the status-quo. Were such a corporate/non-corporate distinction to be made, however, a different picture of library journal holdings may emerge, a picture that would go beyond the hair-splitting involved in determining the political allegiance of opinion journals to grapple with fundamental structural issues of social control and hegemonic processes in contemporary print-based media.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to look at the state of academic library collections of socio-political journals from the perspective of publisher identity, whether corporate or noncorporate. We focus on Canadian academic libraries. This examination provides new data that may lead to re-thinking assumptions about the perceived left-wing bias or neutrality of academic library journal collections as measured by their holdings of socio-political titles. It may provide a new assessment tool for library collections of socio-political journals.

In addition, this study will report about availability through electronic delivery of journals issued by "corporate publishers" and "small publishers." Electronic delivery is an important issue, since many libraries are finding it difficult to resist the promise of instantaneous availability of full-text journals through various on-line electronic intermediaries (Basch, 1996; Roes & Dijkstra, 1994; Rouse, 1997). While Mancini (1996) has shown that traditional document suppliers are able to fill some 76% of the total requests placed in the fields of science/tech-medicine, social science/education, and business/marketing with an average 2-3 day fax-turnaround time and an average cost per article of around US \$15, it remains unclear whether such a broad coverage rate will extend also to digital delivery for journals providing an alternative socio-political perspective. To see what effect electronic delivery systems have on the provision of "corporate publishers" and "small publisher" socio-political titles, we analyze the lists of electronically-available journal titles available from document delivery vendors. As Kane (1997) shows, there is a lively debate about whether libraries should have electronic access or print ownership of their journal collections. This article adds another dimension to this debate.

METHODOLOGY

Magazines were employed as the unit of analysis. One reason for this is that Ohmann (1996) traces the formation of mass culture in the United States back to the proliferation of a new type of national magazine containing large amounts of advertising during the period 1890-1900. He painstakingly reveals how the values

and beliefs of early capitalists penetrated and informed all aspects of these new national magazines, especially their advertisements, quietly allowing readers, on a monthly basis, to define themselves in relation to newly commodified standards. Magazines thus have a rich history as the original vehicles of hegemonic meaning. Academic library holdings of various magazines and journals, as well as their presence or absence in electronic databases, provide us with one measure of participation in hegemonic processes. We used the listings in *The Canadian Index*, *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory 1995-1996*, the *Canadian Magazine Catalogue (CMT)* of the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association (which contains annotated descriptions of member magazines), and the *Alternative Press Index* to compile a list of Canadian-published magazines and journals containing articles of a socio-political nature accessible to a general informed audience. We reviewed all titles in these four sources and selected those that seemed to deal with socio-political issues in Canada. We examined issues of each selected title to ensure that they contained some socio-political content; in those few cases where the title was unavailable, we relied on the annotated descriptions in the *CMT*. Journals and magazines dealing solely with the fields of visual, performing, and literary arts were excluded, as were topic-specific publications appealing to an exclusively business (such as *Canadian Banker*), academic (such as the *Canadian Journal of Remote Sensing*), or religious audience (such as *Catholic Insight*). Cooking, fashion, and hobby magazines, as well as trade and association publications and newsletters, were also not included. We identified a total of one-hundred and five magazines and journals that dealt with socio-political concerns from a wide variety of perspectives. (A complete list of these titles appears in the Appendix.)

We then used quantitative and readily replicable criteria to divide the publications on this list into the categories of "corporate publisher" and "small publisher." A journal title was deemed to be published by a corporate publisher if that publisher, either directly or through majority-owned affiliated companies, also published one or more other titles (magazines or newspapers) *and* if the title in question was subject to an auditing of its circulation figures by a recognized auditing agency such as the *Audit Bureau of Circulations* or the *Print Measurement Bureau*. We based this definition in part on Compaine (1979), who suggests that the criteria of two or more media outlets be used to define a corporate chain publisher. In other words, a corporate publisher, on our definition, can theoretically publish just two titles if the specific title with which we are concerned is audited for its circulation figures.

Audited circulation figures are a tool used by publications to convince advertisers that their ads are reaching a guaranteed and demographically-identified audience of interest to consumer goods manufacturers. This second criteria was included to reflect the interconnection among advertising, a political ideology of consumption, and the perpetuation of a capitalist social order, as identified, for instance, by Ewen (1976) and Goldman (1992). The fact that a publication has an audited circulation can therefore be considered a gauge of a publication's interest in earning a profit for its owners. Taken together, we felt that the circumstance that

a publisher publishes multiple titles *and* has audited circulation for a specific title is a fair operationalization of “corporate publisher.” The concept of “small publisher” was operationalized as a publisher that publishes only one title. This definition is also based on Compaine (1979), who defines an “independent” magazine as one that is “published by firms that publish no other magazines” (p. 142).

Nine of the journals fell into the corporate-controlled category (see Table 7). Ninety-six titles were categorized as “small publishers.”¹ As confirmation that our second operationalization of “corporate publisher” was valid, we examined the 1995 figures for advertising revenue and total revenue of Canadian magazines, as provided by *Masthead*. Eight of the nine corporate titles appeared in the top twenty-five list of Canadian publications as measured by advertising revenue.² And, while the division of the 105 titles into categories of 9 and 96, respectively, may initially appear unequal and might suggest that libraries are providing many viewpoints that dissent from the dominant corporate culture, two factors should be kept in mind. First, circulation figures, contained in *Ulrich’s* 1995-1996 edition and *Media Digest, 1996/1997* (Canadian Media Directors’ Council), show that the nine mainstream corporate-owned magazines enjoyed total distribution of about 3.2 million copies, while the combined circulation of the 96 “small publisher” titles is about 400,000 copies. By any standards, the cumulative impact in the national consciousness of the 9 corporate-owned titles is profound and, at the very least, equal to, if not greater than, the 96 “small publisher” titles despite their more than ten-fold numerical advantage. In addition, we noted during our search of university catalogs that there were multiple subscriptions by many institutions to many of the “corporate publisher” titles. And although all multiple subscriptions were treated, for purposes of this study, as a single subscription, the pattern of multiple subscriptions for “corporate publisher” titles indicates the broad influence, over and above their small numerical presence, that these publications enjoy.

We then searched the catalogs of *all* Canadian academic libraries connected to university-level institutions offering a large number of their courses in the English

¹ Titles such as *The Next City* or *Gravitas* were originally included in the “small publisher” list, but were subsequently deleted because of the financial support that they receive from a corporate-influenced foundation. As well, in January, 1997, three titles that were included in the “small publisher” category—*New Maritimes*, *Northern Woman Journal*, and *Vice Versa*—ceased publication because of a lack of funds.

² Figures are from the Top 25 list contained in *Masthead*, 9 (March 1996), p. 22. In 1995, *Maclean’s* ranks first with advertising revenue of \$28.4 million and total revenue of \$43.5 million. *Chatelaine* ranks 4th with advertising revenue of \$25.2 million and total revenue of \$36.4 million. *Time Canada* ranks 5th with advertising of \$14.97 million and total revenue of \$31.7 million. *L’actualité* ranks 10th, with ad revenue of \$7.6 million and total revenue of \$11.34 million. *Report on Business* magazine is in 14th place with ad revenue and total revenue of \$9.34 million. *Canadian Business* follows in 17th place (ad—\$5.9 million; total—\$7.35 million). *Saturday Night* is 19th, with ad revenue of \$5.8 million and total revenues of \$6.86 million. The *Financial Post Magazine* achieves the 23rd ranking, with ad revenue of \$5.28 million and total revenue figure of \$6.69 million.

TABLE 1
"Small Publisher" and "Corporate Publisher" Journal Holdings by Type of Institution

Category	SMALL PUBL. (%) <i>n</i> = 96	CORP. PUBL. (%) <i>n</i> = 9	RATIO
Medical/Doctoral (12)	52.3 (Md = 50.5;Mo = 51)	93.5 (Md = 94.4;Mo = 100)	~1:2
Comprehensive (11)	45.9 (Md = 41.7;Mo = 38.5)	92.9 (Md = 100;Mo = 100)	~1:2
Undergraduate (20)	31.2 (Md = 31.2;Mo = 21.9)	87.2 (Md = 88.9;Mo = 100)	~1:3
Affiliated (14)	18.4 (Md = 16.2;Mo = 30.2)	57.2 (Md = 55.6;Mo = 55.6)	~1:3
Special Mission-Private (7)	8.3 (Md = 9.4;Mo = 9.4)	68.3 (Md = 66.7;Mo = 88.9)	~1:8

language and offering more than one major area of study. Technical universities and art/design universities were therefore not counted as their library holdings would be mostly uni-dimensional. Predominantly French-language institutions in Québec and New Brunswick were excluded because their holdings would naturally be oriented toward French materials. The list of English-language universities was derived from the *Directory of Canadian Universities*, 30th ed. and was supplemented by the inclusion of newer institutions recently designated as university-colleges. Sixty-four institutions thus defined became the basis of the catalog search.³ (A complete list of these libraries is presented in Table 3.) During June-December, 1996, sixty-one of the library catalogs were searched electronically using the HYTELNET facility on the Internet <<http://moondog.usask.ca>> in order to determine current and ongoing subscriptions for the list of 105 titles. Of the three remaining universities whose catalogs were unavailable through remote access at the time, one was partially searched by staff members on site. The holdings of the remaining two libraries were searched during a personal visit by the first author.⁴

Next we categorized the sixty-four institutions in five ways: (1) by type of institution—medical/doctoral, comprehensive, primarily undergraduate, affiliated, special mission; (2) by geographic region; (3) by population size of surrounding community; (4) by size of student population; and (5) the library's total number of periodical subscriptions. The medical/doctoral, comprehensive, and undergraduate designations were defined as per the annual *Maclean's* survey. Affiliated institutions were those which had a statutory constituent relationship with an often nearby medical/doctoral or comprehensive university. Special mission institutions,

³ After the data were collected for this study, OISE merged with the University of Toronto.

⁴ Personal visits were made to the Redeemer College library in Ancaster, Ontario, and to the University of Nipissing Library in North Bay, Ontario. The authors would like to thank the librarians and staff at these two institutions for their courteous and professional assistance. Thirty-seven items were checked by the staff of the Trinity Western Library in Langley, British Columbia. Final figures for Trinity Western were therefore based on estimates.

TABLE 2
“Small Publisher” and “Corporate Publisher” Journal Titles by Student Population

Category	SMALL PUBL. (%)	CORP. PUBL. (%)	RATIO
	<i>n</i> =96	<i>n</i> =9	
greater than 20,000 students (14)	50.2	93.6	~1:2
between 10,000 and 20,000 students (13)	44.5	93.1	~1:2
between 3,000 and 10,000 students (19)	28	79.5	~1:3
less than 3000 students (18)	14.5	62.9	~1:4

in the Canadian context, were private religious universities and military colleges. Total periodical subscriptions, student populations, and city populations were drawn from the *American Library Directory, 1995-1996*, 48th ed., 1991 Census Metropolitan Area census data available from Statistics Canada, and recent statistics provided in the *Maclean's* 1996 survey. Material posted on the World Wide Web and promotional material commonly available at library reference desks or mailed to the authors on request provided the data on vendors offering access to electronically-stored articles.

RESULTS

As Table 1 shows, the three major types of institutions—medical/doctoral, comprehensive, and undergraduate—consistently subscribed to some 90% of the surveyed corporate-owned periodicals. Those in the affiliated and special mission groupings subscribed at a 57% and 68% rate, respectively. These percentages undergo substantial reduction when it comes to “small publisher” periodical subscriptions. Medical/doctoral universities subscribe to approximately 52% of such titles, while comprehensive institutions decline to a 46% subscription rate. Undergraduate institutions hold 31% of “small publisher” titles, affiliated colleges subscribe at an 18% rate, and special mission institutions are far behind with an 8% subscription rate. Clearly, the number of “small publisher” journal subscriptions is highly dependant on the type of institution, and just as clearly, “small publisher” journal subscriptions are significantly fewer than subscriptions to corporate-owned publications. The ratio of “small publisher” to “corporate publisher” holdings is anywhere from 1:2, in the case of medical/doctoral universities, to 1:8, in the case of special mission institutions.

This observation is borne out by Table 2, which compares holdings according to student population. All institutions having more than 10,000 students have an approximately 93% “corporate publisher” subscription rate. However, this percentage drops dramatically to 63% when student size falls to below three-thousand. The highest rate of “small publisher” journal subscription is found in those

TABLE 3
Holdings of "Small Publisher" Titles (n = 96) in Canadian Universities

INSTITUTION	SMALL PUBL. TITLES (#)	(%)	INSTITUTION	SMALL PUBL. TITLES (#)	(%)
York	81	84	Acadia	30	31
University of Toronto	66	69	Laurentian/Sudbury	30	31
Queens	63	66	Yukon	29	30
Trent	56	58	Malaspina	29	30
British Columbia	56	58	Saskatchewan Indian Fed.	28	29
Windsor	53	55	Concordia (Montreal)	28	29
McMaster	51	53	Cariboo	26	27
McGill	49	51	Okanagan Valley	25	26
Western Ontario	49	51	Cape Breton	24	25
Alberta	48	50	Athabasca	24	25
Memorial	47	49	Brandon	22	23
Ottawa	47	49	Prince Edward Island	21	22
Calgary	46	48	Xavier	21	22
Saskatchewan	45	47	St. Mary's	21	22
Victoria (B.C.)	44	46	Mount Allison	20	21
Ryerson	44	46	Nipissing	18	19
Simon Fraser	43	45	OISE (Toronto)	16	17
Manitoba	43	45	Mt. Saint Vincent	16	17
Wilfrid Laurier	40	42	Kings (London)	15	16
Dalhousie	40	42	Brescia (London)	14	15
Guelph	40	42	Augustana (Camrose)	14	15
Carleton	39	41	Huron (London)	11	11
Bishops	38	40	Trinity Western (Langley)	11	11
Brock	38	40	Royal Military College	9	9
Winnipeg	37	39	Concordia (Edmonton)	9	9
Regina	37	39	University of King's College	8	8
New Brunswick/St. Th.	37	39	University of Trinity College	7	7
Waterloo	36	38	Victoria (Toronto)	6	6
Northern BC	35	36	St. Michael's University	6	6
Lakehead	34	35	Campion/Luther	5	5
Lethbridge	32	33	Royal Roads	4	4
Fraser Valley	31	32	Redeemer (Ancaster)	1	1

universities having a student population greater than ten thousand: 50% for those over 20,000 students and 45% for those with a student population of between, 10,000 and 20,000. As student population falls, commitment to "small publisher" titles also declines. For universities and colleges whose student population is between 3,000 and, 10,000, the subscription rate is 28%, while the very smallest institutions, defined as less 3,000 students, subscribe to about 15% of surveyed "small publisher" periodicals. The range of figures displayed in Table 2 is almost

TABLE 4
Per Capita Institutional Holdings of "Small Publisher" Journals

INSTITUTION	STUDENT POP.	SMALL PUBL. TITLES (#)	PER CAPITA (SQRT TRANSF.) SMALL PUBL. TITLES
1 Saskatchewan Indian F.C.	1,312	28	0.7730
2 Trent	5,386	56	0.7631
3 Bishops	2,545	38	0.7533
4 Northern British Columbia	2,709	35	0.6725
5 Queens	15,278	63	0.5097
6 Yukon	3,242	29	0.5093
7 Brescia (London)	846	14	0.4813
8 Acadia	4,159	30	0.4652
9 Lethbridge	4,912	32	0.4566
10 Augustana (Camrose)	953	14	0.4535
11 Wilfrid Laurier	7,907	40	0.4498
12 Fraser Valley	5,000	31	0.4384
13 Windsor	14,995	53	0.4328
14 Winnipeg	6,783	35	0.4250
15 York	36,826	81	0.4221
16 U. College of Cape Breton	3,316	24	0.4168
17 Lakehead	7,454	34	0.3938
18 Prince Edward Island	2,905	21	0.3896
19 Brandon	3,197	22	0.3891
20 Mount Allison	2,644	20	0.3890
21 McMaster	17,361	51	0.3871
22 Dalhousie	10,920	40	0.3828
23 Huron (London)	828	11	0.3823
24 Malaspina	5,900	29	0.3775
25 Xavier	3,157	21	0.3738
26 Memorial	16,014	47	0.3714
27 U. of King's College (Edm.)	496	8	0.3592
28 Brock	12,176	38	0.3444
29 Laurentian/Sudbury	7,683	30	0.3423
30 Regina	11,754	37	0.3413

exactly duplicated when periodical holdings are viewed in relation to total periodical subscriptions. "Small publisher" and "corporate publisher" holdings demonstrably and consistently vary according to both student population and total number of periodical subscriptions.

On the other hand, the size of the surrounding community does not seem to have much of an affect on "corporate publisher" and "small publisher" holdings. As long as the size of the community is above 50,000 inhabitants, "small publisher" periodical holdings remains steady at around 35%, while those of "corporate publishers" display an average rate of about 80%. This figure in the 80% range for

“corporate publisher” periodicals is maintained even when the size of the surrounding community falls below 50,000 people, although the rate of “small publisher” holdings slips by around 12% to 23%. Geography also has no bearing on the relative holdings of “corporate publisher” or “small publisher” titles. All regions of Canada, arbitrarily divided into British Columbia/Territories, the Western Provinces, Ontario, and Québec/Maritimes, have approximately similar rates of both types of titles. Corporate publisher holdings are highest in British Columbia/Territories and Québec/Maritimes (83%), but in no region does corporate title penetration fall below 80%. With respect to “small publisher” titles, there are, again, only minor variations, with Ontario (34%) being slightly more receptive to “small publisher” titles than the other three regions (31%).

To summarize, the largest collections of “small publisher” journals in Canada may be found in those institutions in Ontario and British Columbia that are either a medical/doctoral or comprehensive university, that have a student body greater than 20,000, and that can claim a total periodical subscription base of more than 10,000 titles. Conversely, the smallest collections of “small publisher” periodicals is displayed by special mission/private universities or colleges and by affiliated institutions, both of which invariably have low student populations and a conse-

TABLE 5
“Small Publisher” Titles Held by at Least Half of Canadian Universities

TITLE	Institutions (#) (n=64)	Institutions (%)
Canadian Forum	63	98.44
Queen's Quarterly	58	90.63
Cdn. Ethnic Studies	55	85.94
Dalhousie Review	54	84.38
Canadian Dimension	53	82.81
Acadiensis	52	81.25
Cdn. Woman Studies	52	81.25
Policy Options	52	81.25
Resources Feminist Research	51	79.69
This Magazine	48	75.00
Atlantis (Mt. St. V.)	45	70.31
Cdn. J. of Native Studies	45	70.31
BC Studies	44	68.75
Stds. in Political Economy	43	67.19
Alternatives	41	64.06
Prairie Forum	41	64.06
Arctic	40	62.50
Perception	40	62.50
Windspeaker	40	62.50
Cdn. J. of Women & Law	39	60.94
Environments (Waterloo)	38	59.38

quent small total periodical base. Journal subscription rates for “corporate publisher” titles outdistance “small publisher” subscription rates by a large margin in every category examined.

These generalizations are given concrete form in Table 3, a more detailed list of institutional holdings of “small publisher” journals. Consider the top 10 listed universities. Seven of these are in Ontario. Nine are either medical/doctoral or comprehensive in nature. Five have student populations of greater than 20,000, while 9 have student populations greater than 10,000. Of those nine institutions having more than 50% of the surveyed “small publisher” periodicals (49 titles or more), seven are in Ontario. In the medical/doctoral category, the top three universities are Toronto (69%), Queens (66%), and the University of British Columbia (58%), while Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Dalhousie are at the bottom, with “small publisher” holding rates of 47%, 45%, and 42%, respectively. In the comprehensive category, the leading universities are York (84%), Windsor (55%), and Memorial (49%), with Waterloo (38%) and Concordia (29%) at the bottom. In the undergraduate category, the leading institutions are Trent (58%), Ryerson (46%), and Wilfrid Laurier (42%), while Nipissing (19%) and Mt. St. Vincent (17%) bring up the rear. The leaders in the affiliated category are the University College of the Fraser Valley (32%), Yukon College (30%), Malaspina (30%), and the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (29%). In the special mission category, Augustana College (15%) in Camrose, Alberta, provides the best access to “small publisher” periodical literature.

Does the situation change when holdings of “small publisher” titles are figured on a per capita basis? From Table 4, which employed the standard statistical technique of a square-root transformation to compare diverse populations, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Trent, Bishops, and the University of Northern British Columbia possess the best “small publisher” holdings per capita. Worthy of mention are the high placings shown by Yukon College in Whitehorse

TABLE 6
Comparative Holdings of “Corporate Publisher” Titles and
“Small Publisher” Titles

	JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTION RATE (%)
CORPORATE PUBL. TITLES	81.94
FIRST 9 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	85.07
FIRST 20 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	74.69
FIRST 30 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	65.21
FIRST 40 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	58.24
FIRST 50 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	52.75
FIRST 60 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	47.42
FIRST 80 SMALL PUBL. TITLES	38.48
ALL SMALL PUBL. TITLES	32.50

TABLE 7
Holdings of "Corporate Publisher" Journals

Title	# of holding institutions (64)	% of holding institutions
Maclean's	63	98.44
Report on Business Magazine	62	96.88
Saturday Night	55	85.94
Financial Post Magazine	54	84.38
L'actualité	52	81.25
Canadian Business	52	81.25
Time	51	79.69
Alberta Report	46	71.88
Chatelaine	37	57.81
Corporate Publ. Journal Subscription Rate		81.94

and Augustana College in Camrose. York University, which has the highest raw number of "small publisher" titles (81), ranks 15th on a per capita basis.

Is there a typical body of "small publisher" journals held across all universities? Table 5 tries to supply an answer. If typical is arbitrarily defined as a title that is held by more than half the institutions in question (32 or more), then a typical "small publisher" corpus consists of 21 titles. Of these twenty-one, fifteen may be classified as emanating from a university, though still of interest to the general public. These 15 titles are: *Queen's Quarterly*, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, *Dalhousie Review*, *Acadiensis*, *Canadian Woman Studies*, *Resources for Feminist Research*, *Atlantis*, *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, *BC Studies*, *Studies in Political Economy*, *Alternatives*, *Prairie Forum*, *Arctic*, *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, and *Environments*. Since these, 15 titles are university-based, it is not surprising that university libraries would subscribe to them on a fairly consistent basis. The remaining 6 journals which are "typical" in "small publisher" collections are: *Canadian Forum*, *Canadian Dimension*, *Policy Options*, *This Magazine*, *Perception*, and *Windspeaker*. *Windspeaker* is a journal identified with native issues, and the remaining five titles deal primarily with general socio-political questions. Far down on the "small publisher" list (see Appendix) are general-opinion magazines such as *New Maritimes*, *Briar Patch*, and *Pacific Current*. Also far down in the list are two journals—*Abilities* and *Archtype*—dealing with issues of interest to the differently abled. Surprisingly, numerous women's issues magazines such as *Women's Education*, *Women and Environments*, *Room of One's Own*, *Herizons*, *Kinesis*, and *Matriart* were not held by more than half of English-based Canadian universities. Journals such as *Fuse*, *Adbusters*, *Peace Magazine*, *Journal of Prisoners*, *Socialist Alternatives*, *Xtra!*, and *Kick It Over*, which often

TABLE 8
Holdings of Academic Socio-Political Journals

Title	# of holding institutions (64)	% of holding institutions
Queen's Quarterly	58	90.63
Cdn. Ethnic Studies	55	85.94
Dalhousie Review	54	84.38
Acadiensis	52	81.25
Cdn. Woman Studies	52	81.25
Resources Feminist Research	51	79.69
Cdn. Journal of Native Studies	45	70.31
Atlantis	45	70.31
BC Studies	44	68.75
Studies in Political Economy	43	67.19
Alternatives	41	64.06
Prairie Forum	41	64.06
Arctic	40	62.50
Cdn. J. of Women & Law	39	60.94
Environments	38	59.38
Études Inuit Studies	30	46.88
Native Studies Review	28	43.75
Labour	28	43.75
Peace Research	23	35.94
Journal of Human Justice	23	35.94
Newfoundland Studies	21	32.81
Labour Capital & Society	16	25.00
Left History	12	18.75
Ryerson R. of Journalism	4	6.25
Journal Subscription Rate (First 9 Titles)		79.17
Journal Subscription Rate (All Titles) (n = 24)		57.49

contain extremely controversial and radical opinions, were among the periodicals to which Canadian libraries subscribed the least. In very broad terms, to the extent that a journal deals with groups or opinions that have marginal visibility in contemporary society, the less it will be subscribed to by university libraries.

Although substantially more "small publisher" titles than "corporate publisher" titles were surveyed, we wanted to make comparisons between them on an equal footing in order to answer, in part, the objection that the sheer number of "small publisher" titles provides many dissenting viewpoints. Table 6 tries to do so by comparing the holdings of the nine "corporate publisher" titles with the holdings

TABLE 9
Number of Canadian University Libraries Holdings of Nine
Most Common Non-academically Connected "Small Publisher"
Journals (No Division Into Subject Categories)

Title	Small Publ. Titles (#)	Small Publ. %
Canadian Forum	63	98.44
Canadian Dimension	53	82.81
Policy Options	52	81.25
This Magazine	48	75.00
Perception	40	62.50
Windspeaker	40	62.50
Akwesasne Notes	30	46.88
New City Magazine	29	45.31
Our Generation	29	45.31
Journal Subscription Rate		66.67

TABLE 10
Holdings of "Small Publisher" Journals By Category
(Academic Titles Included In Other Categories)

	Journal Subscription Rate First Nine Titles Each Category (%)	Journal Subscription Rate All Titles (%)
Corporate Publ. Titles	81.94	81.94
Small Publ. Pol. Sc./pol. (N=15)	64.76	42.81
Small Publ. Womens Interests (N=12)	54.17	44.53
Small Publ. Ethnic Interests (N=12)	50.00	39.97
Small Publ. Envrn./conserv. (N=8)	46.48	46.48

of the nine most common "small publisher" holdings.⁵ Perhaps surprisingly, slightly more "small publisher" titles (85.07%) are held by the surveyed institutions than "corporate publisher" titles (81.94%). As the number of "small

⁵ Journal subscription rates in Tables 6, 7, 9, and, 10 were calculated by dividing the actual number of subscriptions, in all 64 institutions, to a designated category of journal by the total possible number of subscriptions to that category. For example, a theoretical category comprising 10 journals could have 640 total subscriptions, all universities taken together, because each journal could be subscribed to 64 times. The actual number of journals subscribed to in this theoretical category is then divided by 640. If the total number of actual subscriptions for these 10 journals in all 64 institutions is 160, then the journal subscription rate is 25%.

TABLE 11
Digital "Real Time" Full-Text Document Delivery Providers (Category 1)

Vendors	Small Publ. (%)	Corp. Publ. (%)
EBSCO	4.17	66.67
IAC	4.17	44.44
UMI Proquest	5.21	66.67
OCLC First Search	4.17	66.67
Electric Library	4.17	33.33
Total Provision (Category 1) (Total of all titles provided by all of the above companies in Category 1)	7.29	77.78

TABLE 12
Full-Text Database Providers (Category 2)

Vendors	Small Publ. (%)	Corp. Publ. (%)
InfoGlobe	0	22.22
InfoMart	7.29	44.44
Lexis/Nexis	2.08	44.44
CBCA Kiosk - Complete	15.63	66.67
CBCA Kiosk - Select	9.38	66.67
Total Provision (Category 2)	15.63	100.00
Total Provision (Category 1 & 2) (Total of all titles provided by all of the above companies in both Categories 1 and 2)	19.79	100.00

publisher" titles increases, the journal subscription rate decreases to the point where, taking into consideration all 96 "small publisher" titles, the 64 surveyed institutional libraries displayed a 32.5% subscription rate. On the other hand, the subscription rate of individual "corporate publisher" titles stays within a fairly consistent range, as demonstrated by Table 7.

At first glance, the circumstance that the nine most common "small publisher" titles are subscribed to at a slightly greater rate than the nine "corporate publisher" journals is encouraging, even praiseworthy. However, a closer look reveals certain anomalies. As mentioned above, many of the "small publisher" titles (15 out of the first 21 titles and 24 in total) originate from university departments, and it would be expected that university libraries would make a special point to include these titles in their collections. Thus, Table 8 divides out all "academic-published" titles

TABLE 13
Electronic Provision of "Corporate Publisher" and "Small Publisher" Journals
(Academic Titles Included in Other Categories)

	All Electronic Vendor Provision Rate (First Nine Titles Each Category) (%)	All Electronic Vendor Provision Rate (All Titles These Categories) (%)
Corporate Publ. Titles	100	100
Small Publ. Pol.sc./pol. (<i>n</i> = 15)	55.56	40.00
Small Publ. Womens Interests (<i>n</i> = 12)	44.44	33.33
Small Publ. Ethnic Interests (<i>n</i> = 12)	22.22	16.67
Small Publ. Envrn./conserv. (<i>n</i> = 8)	37.50	37.50
All Small Publ. Titles (<i>n</i> = 96)	66.70	19.79

into a separate category. Here, *all* "academic-published" journals are subscribed to at 57.49% rate, while the nine most common "academic-published" titles enjoy a subscription rate of some 79.17%. When "academic-published" journals are not included with other socio-political "small publisher" journals, the subscription rates for those non-academic "small publisher" journals decline significantly. In fact, as Table 9 notes, the nine most common non-academic "small publisher" journals have only a 66.67% subscription rate, compared with the 81.94% rate for the nine corporate titles.

If the "small publisher" titles are broken down into subject categories, as in Table 10, the difference between these categories and "corporate publisher" holdings becomes even more stark. We created four operationalized and readily replicable categories: (1) general political reviews; (2) women's interests; (3) ethnic interests; and (4) environment/conservation. These categories were operationalized based on subject divisions in *Ulrich's International Periodical Directory* and title key words.⁶ (See the APPENDIX for specific titles in each category, where the number after the title represents categories as described in the previous sentence.) As shown in Table, 10, on average the subscription rate for the 9 most common "small publisher" general socio-political journals is 64.76%, some

⁶ Category 1 consists of any titles listed in the Political Science or Literary & Political Review subject sections of *Ulrich's* or containing some form of the word "politics" in its title; Category 2 consists of any titles listed in the Women's Interests subject section of *Ulrich's* or containing some form of the words "woman" or "feminine" in the title; Category 3 consists of any titles listed in the "Ethnic Interests" subject section of *Ulrich's* or containing some form of the words "ethnic," "multicultural," "aboriginal," "native," or "African" in the title. Category 4 consists of any titles listed in the "Environmental Studies" or "Conservation" sections of *Ulrich's* or containing some form of the words "environment" or "conservation" in the title.

17% less than the corporate subscription rate of 81.94%. For journals devoted to women's interests, the subscription rate for the top nine titles is 54.17%; for ethnic interest journals, the rate is 50%; and for environmental journals, it is 46.48%. These last three figures are significantly less than the corporate subscription rate of 81.94%. The percentages for "small publisher" journal holdings decline even more when *all* titles in each of the four categories are accounted for, as shown in the second column of Table 10.

Another important aspect of this study is summarized in Tables 11 and 12, both of which address the issue of socio-political full-text journal availability through electronic media. As an ever larger and larger number of academic libraries are considering migrating their journal collections toward electronic storage and/or delivery, what will this migration mean for "corporate publisher" and "small publisher" journal access? First, fully, 100% of the "corporate publisher" periodicals surveyed will be available to them, but only 19.79% of "small publisher" titles will be available to them from these same suppliers.⁷ For those institutions currently supplying their faculty and students with fewer than 20 "small publisher" titles, electronic provision will enhance the quality of their holdings in this area. However, it should be mentioned that the electronic service that provides the most "small publisher" Canadian titles—*CBCA Kiosk Complete*—offers 15 of the 19 total "small publisher" titles available from *all* suppliers. In other words, 50 of the surveyed library systems already have more print-based "small publisher" titles than the number of titles available from the supplier with the single most number of "small publisher" Canadian titles, and 46 libraries, or approximately three-fourths of the surveyed institutions, currently have more "small publisher" titles in print versions than the total of such titles available to them electronically from all suppliers. Diversity of titles will also be compromised, as the same electronic titles will appear in all libraries.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 13, when print availability of "small publisher" titles is compared with electronic availability of "small publisher" titles across all categories, those libraries which rely primarily on electronic providers for full-text journal access will be shortchanged in all categories of "small publisher" journals. For instance, while the print journal subscription rate for the 9 most common "small publisher" journals is 85.07% (Table 6), electronic provision of these titles decreases to 66.7% (Table 13). When "small publisher" titles are divided into subject categories, a slightly better picture of electronic provision rates, in comparison to journal subscription rates, emerges. For example, the print journal

⁷ The 19 "small publisher" titles provided by all electronic vendors combined is as follows. Note that this does not mean that each electronic vendor supplies all 19 titles; rather, if a library subscribed to all 10 electronic vendors, then it would get 19 "small publisher" Canadian titles. These titles are: *Alternatives*, *Arctic*, *Canadian Dimension*, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, *Canadian Forum*, *Canadian Woman Studies*, *Dalhousie Review*, *Ecodecision*, *Environments*, *Herizons*, *Inuktitut*, *New Maritimes*, *Our Times*, *Peace Magazine*, *Peace Research*, *Resources for Feminist Research*, *This Magazine*, *Windspeaker*, *Women and Environments*.

TABLE 14

Number of "Small Publisher" Journals	Number of Holding Libraries
0 to 8	7
9 to 16	9
17 to 24	8
25 to 32	10
33 to 40	12
41 to 48	9
49 to 56	6
57 to 64	1
65 to 72	1
73 to 80	0
81 to 88	1
89 to 96	0

subscription rate for the 9 most common women's issues publications is 54.17% (Table 10), while the electronic provision rate is 44.4% (Table 13), a gap of only 10%. A similar 10% gap may be discerned in the provision rates of environmental journals. When all titles are included in the comparison, however, the differences between print journal subscription rates and electronic provision rates increases. Considering all the various methods of comparison, it would be safe to say that, at the end of 1996, print journal subscription rates to "small publisher" Canadian titles outpaced electronic provision of those same titles by a range of 10%-20%. With respect to "corporate publisher" journal availability through electronic providers, fully 100% of these titles were available from various suppliers. In fact, an academic library would only have to subscribe to 4 of these electronic vendors to get full-text coverage of all surveyed corporate titles. In comparison with the 81.94% print holding rate of "corporate publisher" journals in academic libraries (Table 7), these corporate publications will become even more prevalent in electronic versions than before.

DISCUSSION

On the whole, as revealed by Table 14, a frequency distribution of "small publisher" journal holdings, almost one-half (31) of the surveyed institutions hold between 25 and 48 of these journals. Twenty-four institutions hold fewer than 25 of these titles, while only 9 institutions have more than 49 titles in their collections. In other words, 55 out of the 64 surveyed institutions (86%) have fewer than half of the "small publisher" socio-political titles. This may be cause for concern, given the overwhelming commitment of all libraries to subscribe to "corporate

publisher” journals at an average rate of 81.94% (Table 7). As well, given that there is an extensive body of research arguing that news media content constitutes a “rough mapping of power relations in society” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, p. 224) and that the presentation of mainstream news is part of a “systematic (but not necessarily or even usually deliberate) engineering of mass consent to the established order” (Gitlin, 1980, p. 253), the dearth of alternative “small publisher” voices to counter the influence of mainstream “corporate publisher” periodicals may abrogate the ideal of the university as a philosophical commons extending equal space and weight to those views which challenge existing social arrangements. Moreover, the limited number of “small publisher” voices provided by electronic vendors accords, to a certain degree, with the theory of acceptable dissent, whereby the illusion of a marketplace open to all ideas, no matter how revolutionary, is maintained by strategies of confinement (Altschull, 1995, pp. 147-149).

Libraries that replace print journals with electronic provision should also be aware of theoretical issues connected with browsing. Cove and Walsh (1987) divide browsing into three categories: (1) search browsing, an activity wherein the “desired product or goal is known;” (2) general purpose browsing, an activity where specified sources are consulted “on a regular basis because it is highly probable that they contain items of interest;” and (3) serendipity browsing, defined as “a purely random, unstructured and undirected activity” (pp. 183-184). While electronic provision of journals would certainly be a great help in facilitating “search browsing,” it is not readily apparent that it will aid in the latter two browsing categories. The work of Olsen (1994) is eloquent on this topic. In surveying chemists, sociologists, and English literature professors in *Electronic Journal Literature: Implications for Scholars*, Olsen found that their chief purpose in browsing journal literature was not information retrieval. Rather, browsing was conceived of as a necessary process of continuing self-education to keep abreast of the field, a process that, for some, took on the attributes of an adventure, where new paradigms are discovered or previously unseen connections are made. Some 82% of the surveyed researchers mentioned, unasked, the vital importance of serendipity browsing, which most commonly occurs either when looking through recent issues of a selected number of journals or when the retrieval of a specific article from a specific journal leads the scholar to scan the remainder of the articles in that particular journal issue. Summarizing, Olsen remarks that serendipity is intimately tied to the “structure of printed journal literature and the visualization of a body of text” (p. 40).

These findings concerning the importance of browsing in the scholarly research process are one reason to exercise caution in adopting a policy of conversion to electronic provision of journals. More fundamentally, the insights into browsing gained by Olsen are consistent with what Kuhlthau, Turock, George, and Belvin (1990) and Kuhlthau (1991, 1993), through the course of numerous studies in school, academic, and public libraries, have discovered about the information search process. Building on the work of Kelly, Taylor, and Belkin, Kuhlthau

divides the search process into six stages: initiation; selection; exploration; formulation; collection; and presentation. The first four stages are characterized by such feelings as uncertainty, confusion, frustration, vagueness, and doubt as the individual grapples with her topic, searching out new directions and making intellectual discoveries. If we map the browsing definition used by Cove and Walsh onto Kuhlthau's model, Kuhlthau's first three stages are highly random and unstructured, the equivalent of serendipity browsing, and turn into "general purpose" browsing during the fourth so-called formulation phase. Only in Kuhlthau's latter two stages does a sense of linearity of purpose, what has been termed "search browsing," enter into the picture. As Kuhlthau observes, information systems do not pay much attention to the sorts of problems encountered by users in the first four stages of the information search process. "There appears to be a gap," she writes, "between the system's traditional patterns of information provision and the user's natural process of information use" (Kuhlthau, 1991, p. 361).

Electronic journals, as currently delivered, do not help users as much as print journals with the most significant phases of the information search process—discovery of ideas and the forging of connections among diverse fields. Instead, electronic journals concentrate on providing focused information only when the individual searching for information has gained a certain amount of confidence and found a sense of direction. On the other hand, browsing through print journals on library shelves more closely resembles the actual psychological and cognitive stages of information-seeking behavior of both students and experienced scholars as they attempt to form ideas and understand various points of view.

The issue of browsing intersects with the question of the dominance of "corporate publisher" journals in three ways. First, because electronic vendors provide relatively few "small publisher" titles on their systems, the opportunity for any type of browsing of these titles is reduced. Second, when such titles *are* available on information systems, their availability is more conducive to linear "search browsing" than it is to serendipity and discovery browsing. Third, as Grzeszkiewicz and Hawbaker (1996) have shown in a study of 130 journal titles purported to be available in an electronic full-text version, journals available online are by no means full-text in the traditional sense, because of missing issues, missing articles, and abstract-only offerings. Moreover, they point to common disclaimers such as "[t]he magazines included in our products are subject to change without notice due to changes in contractual arrangements with our publishers" (p. 62). We speculate that, should any "changes in contractual arrangements" occur, they would be more detrimental to "small publishers" than to "corporate publishers."

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Since we used content analysis for the selection of our 105 magazine titles, an inter-coder reliability check, such as that recommended by Holsti (1969), could have been useful in determining the relative accuracy of our selections. Too, the

study suffers from the fact that the “corporate publisher” category is limited to nine publications. In future studies of this kind, consideration should be given to including such titles as *Profit*, *BC Business*, *Manitoba Business*, or *Canadian Living*, even if this means going beyond the originally-established parameters of only selecting those magazines which contained socio-political content. Additionally, to increase the size of this category, other large-circulation American-based titles, such as *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*, that have ready circulation in Canada and no Canadian editorial office, could have been included. This could have been justified based on the transnational dimension of corporate publishing, as exemplified in the Canadian-United States situation by such economic arrangements as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Local and regional corporate-owned newspapers to which every library has at least some subscriptions could also have been included. Here, libraries having different newspapers owned by the same conglomerate would be coded as subscribing to a publication of that corporation despite masthead variation.

With respect to the “small publisher” category, three types of publications were absent. While some publications dealing with ethnic issues are included, many titles published by ethnic communities in their own languages were not included. Also, newer titles such as *Broken Pencil*, *Diverge*, *Elm Street*, *Urban Mosaik*, and *Vallium* were also not included, given their relatively recent founding dates. Also missing are those publications, commonly referred to as *zines*, that have proliferated as desktop publishing has become increasingly accessible. Although of great importance to the relevant communities of interest, these categories of publication often escape the attention of the collections departments of academic libraries. However, any future work updating this study should include some of these omitted titles.

The scope of the study could be extended in a number of ways. First, a broader range of “small publisher” journals, namely literary and artistic magazines, could be canvassed. It would be useful to see whether, within the universe of “small publisher” journals, there is a differentiation in the rate of holdings between socio-political and literary-artistic publications. Second, the number of searched academic catalogs could be increased to include two-year community colleges. Third, as more and more library catalogs achieve on-line status, a similar study could be conducted on the holdings of public library systems in Canada, and, using a different journal set, in the United States. It would also be interesting to compare the rate of French-language “corporate publisher” and “small publisher” holdings in Québec with the rate in Canada for both academic and public libraries with a view to determining if the corporatization phenomenon is equally prevalent in different cultural milieux. Finally, another way to examine the extent to which libraries may reflect the influence of a corporate ethos would be to survey journal holdings using criteria favored by the advertising industry. One such criteria is *Top Twenty National Publications among Adults with Household Income of \$60,000 or More* (Turow, 1992, p. 102). Because this list is invariably dominated by publica-

tions owned by corporate entities, a study could be conducted examining library subscription patterns from the standpoint of advertising reach.

CONCLUSION

This article has presented evidence that hierarchy and systemic inequality in existing and evolving news media are important issues and ought to be taken into consideration in the development of serials collections of academic libraries. An unobtrusive quantitative method was employed to determine whether the socio-political journal holdings of Canadian university libraries were dominated by corporate or by independent small publishers. Almost all English-language Canadian universities privileged "corporate publisher" titles over "small publisher" periodicals by a wide margin. Some institutions, nonetheless, had noteworthy collections of "small publisher" socio-political journals. The size of the student population and the type of the institution in question correlated strongly with the size of the "small publisher" journal collection. In general terms, the larger the student body, the greater was the size of the "small publisher" journal collection. Too, medical/doctoral institutions had strong "small publisher" collections. Conversely, special-mission institutions had weak "small publisher" collections.

A final finding was that universities contemplating full-text electronic delivery of journals should pay close attention to the content lists provided by the selected vendors. If the present study is any indication, electronic document delivery vendors offering full-text access to Canadian socio-political journals offer all surveyed "corporate publisher" titles but only 19.79% of "small publisher" journals. For special mission and some smaller affiliated or undergraduate institutions, the 19.79% figure would be an improvement in their breadth of coverage of alternative "small publisher" voices. However, for 47 of the surveyed institutions, the 19.79% electronic coverage rate would be lower than their current print-based coverage, often by a wide margin. Indeed, for the twenty institutions with the most print-based "small publisher" journals, electronic coverage would diminish access to "small publisher" titles by half or more. This is not to suggest that libraries which opt for electronic access to full-text journals will immediately unsubscribe to print journals. Nevertheless, the increasing popularity of electronic access to journals may accelerate the trend of a reduction in the print-versions of publications deemed to be less important than more popular mainstream "corporate publisher" titles. In fact, academic libraries such as York, Toronto, Queen's, University of British Columbia, and Trent (the five institutions with the highest number of "small publisher" titles), should think seriously about emphasizing this unique aspect of their collection.

Alternative viewpoints and advocacy have blossomed through the proliferation of independent "small publisher" magazines and journals. Although these publications do not have large circulation bases, their very existence is a testament to a refusal to accept conventional, centralized and mainstream thinking. In many ways

they challenge the tenets of what Gitlin (1980) and Shoemaker and Reese (1996) identify as a cohesive normative ideology that reproduces and legitimizes existing social relations. Accordingly, decisions about whether to subscribe to electronic vendors of journals should take into account the tendency of these vendors, whether consciously or not, to reinforce existing patterns of social relations through the provision of a greater number of corporate titles than small publisher titles. For libraries, reliance on electronic vendors may translate into a greater homogenization of socio-political journal collections as small, independent publishers are electronically excluded or variously marginalized.

APPENDIX

NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS HOLDING "SMALL PUBLISHER" TITLES (* = ACADEMIC TITLES)

	#	%		#	%
Canadian Forum (1)	63	98.44	*Labour, Capital, Society	16	25.00
*Queen's Quarterly	58	90.63	Native Voice (3)	16	25.00
*Cdn. Ethnic Studies (3)	55	85.94	Briar Patch (1)	15	23.44
*Dalhousie Review (1)	54	84.38	New Maritimes	15	23.44
Canadian Dimension (1)	53	82.81	Our Times	15	23.44
*Acadiensis	52	81.25	Fuse	14	21.88
*Cdn. Woman Studies (2)	52	81.25	Inroads	14	21.88
Policy Options (1)	52	81.25	Peace Magazine (1)	14	21.88
*Resources Feminist Research (2)	51	79.69	*Left History	12	18.75
This Magazine (1)	48	75.00	Ploughshares Monitor (1)	12	18.75
*Atlantis (2)	45	70.31	Abilities	11	17.19
*Cdn. J. of Native Studies (3)	45	70.31	Action Now	11	17.19
*BC Studies	44	68.75	New Federation	11	17.19
*Std. in Political Economy (1)	43	67.19	Adbusters (4)	10	15.63
*Alternatives (4)	41	64.06	Choices (Mtl.)	9	14.06
*Prairie Forum (4)	41	64.06	Journal of Prisoners	9	14.06
*Arctic	40	62.50	Justice as Healing	9	14.06
Perception	40	62.50	Kahtou News	9	14.06
Windspeaker (3)	40	62.50	Matriart (2)	9	14.06
*Cdn. J. of Women & Law (2)	39	60.94	Aboriginal Voices (3)	8	12.50
*Environments (4)	38	59.38	Archtype	8	12.50
Akwesasne Notes (3)	30	46.88	Pacific Current	8	12.50
*Études Inuit Studies (3)	30	46.88	Refuge	8	12.50
New City Magazine (4)	29	45.31%	Interculture (3)	7	10.94
Northern Perspectives (4)	29	45.31%	Common Ground (PEI)	6	9.38
Our Generation	29	45.31%	Geist	6	9.38

APPENDIX (CONT.)

	#	%		#	%
Fireweed (2)	28	43.75	Southern Africa Report (1)	6	9.38
*Labour (NFLD)	28	43.75	Talking Stick	6	9.38
*Native Studies Review (3)	28	43.75	Xtra	6	9.38
Humanist In Canada	27	42.19	Moment	5	7.81
Ecodecision (4)	26	40.63	Vice Versa	5	7.81
Women and Environments (2)	26	40.63	*Ryerson R. Journalism	4	6.25
Women's Education (2)	26	40.63	Share (3)	4	6.25
Environment Views (4)	24	37.50	Socialist Alternatives	4	6.25
Room of One's Own (2)	24	37.50	Diva	3	4.69
Inuktitut	23	35.94	Human Rights Tribune (1)	3	4.69
*Journal of Human Justice	23	35.94	Socialist Challenge	3	4.69
*Peace Research (1)	23	35.94	Eyetalian	2	3.13
Currents (3)	22	34.38	Northern Woman J. (2)	2	3.13
Multiculturalism (3)	22	34.38	Socialist Worker (1)	2	3.13
NeWest Review (1)	22	34.38	Alphabet City	1	1.56
Our Schools/Ourselves	22	34.38	Highgrader	1	1.56
Herizons (2)	21	32.81	Kick It Over (1)	1	1.56
*Newfoundland Studies	21	32.81	Towards Justice in Health	1	1.56
Northern Review	21	32.81	At the Crossroads	0	0.00
Border/Lines Magazine	20	31.25	Nation (Montreal)	0	0.00
Kinesis (2)	19	29.69	Rungh	0	0.00
Up Here	19	29.69	Transmission	0	0.00

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